



By the King.

**A Proclamation commanding the due execution
of the Laws made against eating and selling of Flesh,
in Lent and other times prohibited.**



Hereas by the Statute made in the second and third year of the Reign of the late King Edward the first, for many weighty reasons in that Act specified, prohibition was made against eating of flesh upon any Friday or Saturday, or the Embring dayes, and other dayes commonly called Vigils, or in any day in Lent, or upon other dayes commonly reputed Fish dayes, under the pain of forfeiting for the first offence ten shillings, & for the second offence twenty shillings, and to suffer imprisonment, with like paines for every time offending. And by the Statute made in the fifth and sixt yeers of the same Kings Reign, divers dayes in the same Act mentioned, are ordained to be Fasting dayes; And in the fifth year of the Reign of the late Queen Elizabeth (amongst other Constitutions) for the maintenance of the Nobles of this Realm, a penalty of three pounds is imposed upon every man that shall eat flesh upon any dayes then used as a Fish day, or imprisonment by the space of three moneths, for every time offending, with a forfeiture of forty shillings upon the owner of the house wherein it shall be eaten, he not disclosing it to the Magistrate; And in the seven and twentieth year of the Reign of the said late Queen it is ordained; That the Innholders, Victualers, and others in that Act mentioned, selling flesh victuall at those times, to any not lawfully licensed to eat the same, shall forfeit for every time offending, five pounds, and suffer ten dayes imprisonment; Of which Lawes some mitigation was made by a Statute made in the five and thirtieth year of the Reign of the said late Queen Elizabeth, whereby the eater of flesh upon the times prohibited, shall forfeit twenty shillings for every offence, or sustain one moneths close imprisonment; And the Seller not disclosing, shall forfeit for every offence, thirteen shillings four pence. By all which Lawes it is manifest, that albeit the makers of them did well know, that one day, or one meat of it self, was not more holy, more pure, or more clean then another; And that the meates beilled not, but that the same were lawfull, so that they were not used in disobedience and vice; Yet they did finde



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that divers turned their knowledge to satisfie their sensuality, contemned abstinence, which was a means to vertue, and to subdue mens bodies to their souls and spirits; And finding that the increase of Fishermen was the means to preferre the State of this Realm, and that the abstinence occasioned the saving and increase of Flesh, were carefull to ordain those Laws as politique Laws, for the increase of Fishermen and Partners, and repairing of Port-towns, and maintaining of Navigation, and the same ought as politique Laws to be obeyed. And notwithstanding the execution of them be requisite, and His Majestie by His often Proclamations commanded, that they should be put in due execution upon those that should offend against them; yet such hath been the common neglect of many of His people, that they have not onely frequently offended against those good Laws, and incurred the penalties of them but have committed those offences with high contempt. And divers of His Officers and Ministers of Justice have been remisse and negligent in punishing of them, and in prevention of the offences, which he will not longer suffer.

Therefore His Majestie doth require and straightly charge and command all His people (the common good of this Realm requiring it) That due execution be had of His Laws, upon all those that shall offend against them, either in eating or venting of Flesh at times prohibited, or not fasting upon the dayes by His Laws appointed for fasting dayes, not only under the pains ordained by the Statutes, but such further punishment as by the Laws may be inflicted on wilfull contemners of His Laws and Proclamations, requiring due obedience unto them in His Majesties Courts of Justice; And His Majestie doth also command all His Officers and Ministers of Justice, That they cause diligent inquiry to be made of all such as shall offend herein, and inflict such pains and punishment on them as by the Laws are required.

And that for prevention of such abuses, they take all good wayes, as by His Proclamations and Orders formerly published is commanded: Letting them know, that His Majestie will cause inquiry to be made of their remissenesse in this behalf; And that such punishment for their negligence shall be inflicted on them, as ought to be upon the neglecters or contemners of His Laws, and those that shall not observe their duties and trust reposed in them. And unlesse by this occasion Fishmongers and others selling Fish, and other Victuals allowed by the Laws to be eaten at those times, should presume to enhance the prizes of them, His Majestie doth hereby straightly charge and command the Lord Mayor of His Citie of London, and all others that have the keeping of the Assize of Victuall, That they take diligent care to keep reasonable Assize and prizes upon Fish and other Victuall, under the pains of His Laws to be inflicted upon Mis-governours of the places committed to their charge, and such further punishment as their severall offences shall merit.

Given at the Court at Whitehall, the sixt day of February, in the fiftenth year of His Majesties Reigne.

 God save the King.

Imprinted at London by Robert Barker, Printer
to the Kings most Excellent Majestic: And by the
Assignes of JOHN BILL. 1639.

